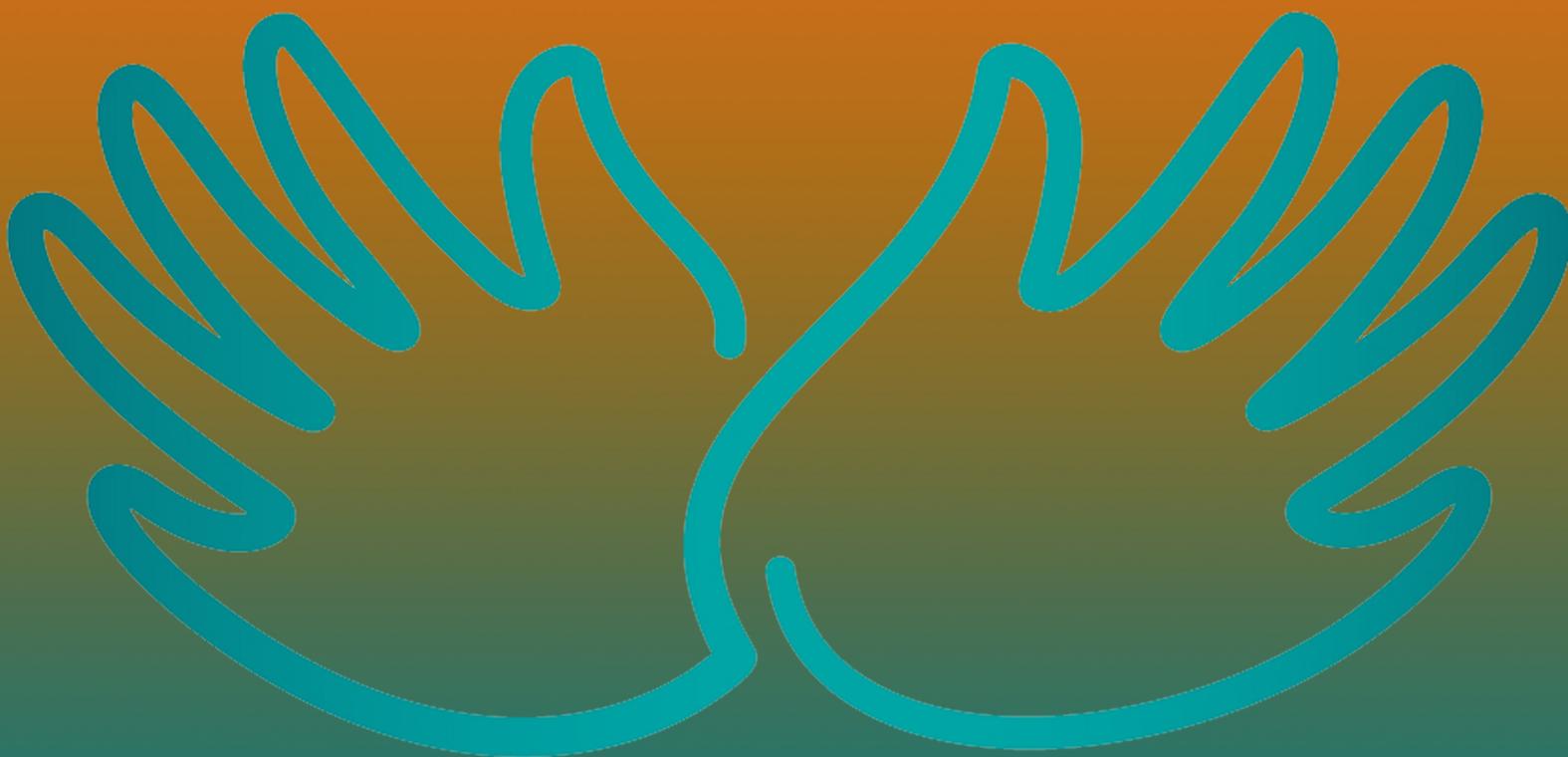


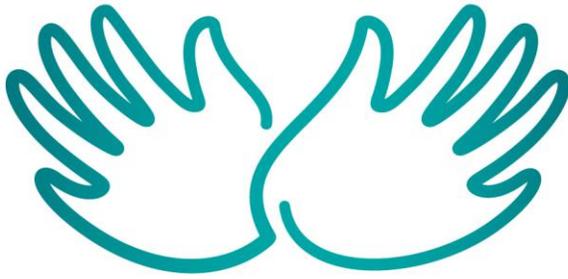
# ANNUAL REPORT 2015



## **PALMS FOR LIFE FUND**

**FOOD, WATER, AND  
EDUCATION FOR ALL**





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EDUCATION FOR ALL**

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## **Annual Report 2015**

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## 1. Foreword by the Executive Director

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Dear Reader,

It is with a renewed pride that I am sharing with you this ninth Annual Report of Palms for Life Fund since we have been incorporated in May 2006.

In 2015 we implemented a second large project in Swaziland, this time funded by the European Union. Our work in Swaziland has become a tipping point for Palms for Life Fund. We have now become a major player in the NGO community in Swaziland and are able to reach out to the most vulnerable populations. Our local NGO has a solid operational capacity to implement other similar programs in the country. We have integrated our work with the government and have developed a broad consultative platform where key government players meet with Palms for Life and jointly agree to strategies and procedures.

As in previous years, we have remained vigilant to new funding opportunities and submitted several funding proposals; we connected with corporations, foundations and individuals and pursued our cause-related marketing program: Art for Life. We started work on a new Faces of Hunger in America Film Festival to be completed in 2016. We managed Join1000 as a platform to engage individuals in our work.

Palms for Life Fund owes its achievements to the members of our Board of Directors and Advisors and to the many individuals who have contributed by offering their free services and advice, responding to our appeals or simply encouraging us to continue our work.

To all of you and in particular, to my dear husband David Rottman and my beloved daughters Naâma and Maayan, and to little Leah and Noah, inspiring me to go on with my work for them and all the children of the world, THANK YOU! I hope you enjoy the reading.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Laufer-Rottman'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Hannah Laufer-Rottman  
Executive Director

## 2. Committed to Social Change

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Palms for Life supports the idea that Social Change is best achieved by investing in education with the underlying idea that we need to also change behaviors and attitudes. By focusing especially on children, we ensure early education and more life opportunities. And by focusing on women's and girls' education, we guarantee even more impact because, as is widely documented, an educated young woman will more likely have less children, will have healthier children and will send them to school.

Palms for Life's primary distinguishing factor is that we are committed to empowering local organizations to take ownership of their own development work. An important consideration is that Palms for Life does not target "beneficiaries," it engages "participants." Our expertise allows us to carefully select implementing partners that have an impeccable track record, and have benefited from other international grants. For each project that we consider for support, we carefully assess its sustainability, its long term impact and active community participation. We verify that only a small percentage of the social investment is spent on recurring costs, and that all necessary conditions are met to ensure full operational capacity. In most cases, we do not execute projects ourselves which allows us to keep our operating costs very low. The only exception is Swaziland, where we have established a local NGO, Palms for Life Fund Swaziland, which assumes the responsibility for the daily management of our work, with oversight, guidance and coordination provided by Palms for Life's headquarters office in the US. Daily efforts continue to be provided to strengthen the operating capacity of our team in Swaziland where we have appointed a local Project Manager and a team of field staff and consultants. Palms for Life New York continues to assume full responsibility and coordination of the Swaziland activities.

We continue to believe that it is essential to bring into the Social Change arena as many active and committed participants as possible as the job cannot be done just by a few. It requires a massive mobilisation. Palms for Life is one such participant. We also believe in the need to engage as many people as possible to join in today's fight against global hunger and poverty, hence our unique motto "we are all connected."

## 3. Our Commitments: Basic Human Rights

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Palms for Life Fund advocates for the poor around the world, from a human rights perspective and not out of charity. Millions of people lack many basic resources such as food, water or sanitation, and millions of children cannot attend school. Therefore, we have several key commitments:

Our first commitment is to act **NOW**, based on lessons learned and on actual urgent needs, as identified by the local populations that we serve. We aim at engaging as many partners as possible, thus maximizing resources. Our key stakeholders are the project "participants" whom we empower and engage through training, sensitization, sharing of information and by promoting active participation. At the same time, we also expect from our participants to be accountable and

responsible in the projects we support. We formalize such relationship by signing Partnership Agreements with participating communities in which we outline our shared commitments and responsibilities. This is actively implemented in our program in Swaziland where we have signed 30 such agreements with local communities in 2015.

Our second commitment is to look at social/economic investments in terms of **impact and return**. How can we achieve maximum and sustainable impact of our operations on the ground? The answer is always complex and demands that we look at the big picture to address the many elements that are part of our participants' everyday life in an integrated and sustainable manner. This is particularly true for projects that engage women as we must not only have a good understanding of each culture and reality, we must also address every element that might prevent a woman to become an active participant in a given project. We thus encourage our partners to design projects following the same vision.

Our third commitment is to build **local capacity**. We build the capacity of our local partners and transfer resources for them to manage. The scope for support that our partners need is enormous! We see building local capacity as the right thing to do if we want to achieve proposed results in a sustainable way. This translates into engaging key local players as partners in all our activities; provide them with the services and equipment they require to operate properly; recognize their comparative advantage and grant them the same kind of value and recognition that is granted to international organizations. Working with solid local implementers allows Palms for Life to keep its own overhead within reasonable margins. By local, we also include local communities as they too fulfill the role of participating in development. They too need to be trained and educated and strengthened in their capacity to become "micro-democracies."

Throughout 2015 Palms for Life Fund in Swaziland became even stronger and better established. Today, it has become a major player among the civil society in Swaziland.

Also in 2015 we continued with our Art for Life program to raise funds and awareness about our work.



**Art for Life**

## 4. Our Partners

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In 2015, Palms for Life managed its relationship with our partners on the ground, local NGOs, in our select countries, mainly in Burkina Faso, Ecuador and Nicaragua and with supporting organizations in the US such as the Collegiate Church Corporation and the UN Federal Credit Union. We also managed 2 Fiscal Sponsorship relationships for projects in the US and in India (Sanitation Project).

The way we are able to keep our partnerships on the ground alive is by a continuous attempt to seek funding to support their program and enhance their capacity to run social development projects. We trust that our partners are well skilled to design projects, monitor activities and report back on results and impact. They are marked by a trajectory of social commitment, often working in difficult conditions, sometimes in uncertain political environments and always with insufficient funds to carry on their work.

In 2015, we received numerous requests from local organizations to support their work. There is evidence that insufficient funding is available, throughout the development world to support high quality projects – of which many would directly have huge impact on improving the overall quality of life and contributing to attaining the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs). An important message to prospective funders: many valuable projects – and reliable local NGOs - are currently on stand-by simply because of lack of funding. In 2015, our active partners on the ground were:

- Burkina Faso: Population Council
- Burkina Faso: ADEP (new partner)
- Ecuador: Fundación Esquel
- Ecuador: INEPE
- Ecuador: RIEcuador
- Nicaragua: El Porvenir
- Nicaragua: Seeds of Learning



## 5. Our Activities and Results

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### A. Fundraising

In 2015, we submitted several funding proposals within our strategic goals as outlined in our former 3-year business plan (see attached Annex B).

We researched prospects and submitted Letters of Inquiry, Concept Papers and proposals to the following:

- Collegiate Church Corporation
- United Nations Federal Credit Union (UNFCU)
- Marble Collegiate Church
- Dextra Baldwin McGonagle Foundation; the Foundation has been a loyal supporter of Palms for Life Fund's capacity during the last 8 years.
- Alpern Family Foundation
- UNICEF Swaziland
- Helmsley Charitable Trust
- Elton John Foundation
- Starr Foundation

Many of these requests have not been successful however, we obtained excellent results with UNICEF in Swaziland where we signed a first Partnership Agreement and obtained a generous grant to support our work in that country. We were also successful with the Dextra Baldwin McGonagle Foundation and the Alpern Family Foundation to support our Faces of Hunger in America Film Festival.

### B. Main activities and Results



#### **1. Swaziland: EU-funded project: Reducing Vulnerability of Children at the Grassroots: Strengthening Local Capacity and Improving Critical Community Assets at Neighbourhood Care Points (NCPs) and other Community Centers in Swaziland: Hhohho and Manzini Regions**

The contract for this project was signed in November 2014. This was the first agreement ever with the European Union and a true success for Palms for Life Fund Swaziland and its mother organization, Palms for Life US.

In 2015, the project became fully operational and very successful. Pre-positioning work created solid relationships with the Government key players and with other local organizations such as NERCHA, UNICEF, WFP, and others, including AMICAALL, All Out Africa, and EduGate. These relationships contribute toward project sustainability.

The project recruited and hired all local staff. Under the continuing guidance and advice of the Palms for Life Office, we trained and supervised a full-time Project Manager and hired a Field Monitoring

Specialist (M/E), Field Team Leader, and 8 Community Mobilisation Officers, as well as administrative support staff. We were determined to ensure quality ECCDE is provided to the children under 5, and identified professionals with that background. We also focused much of Food Security and consulted periodically with WFP on these issues. To support Palms for Life's overall coordination responsibility, we hired a part-time Director of Administration and Finance (who reports to the Executive Director) and oversees Finance and Administration Officer, one Office Clerk and one Driver/Assistant. Another key person in the project is our senior Program Advisor, a part-time consultant who advised the senior project staff on all project strategy and key activities. She also reports to the Executive Director.

Two advisory groups to support the project activities were successfully established: an Advisory and Technical Working Group and a Water, Food and Nutrition Security Working Group. These have wide Government and NGO representation and meet quarterly to advise on- and confirm- project strategy and implementation.

In 2015, we selected a total of 30 Centres that work with most vulnerable children. This is the first set of a total of 90 Centres that the project will cover. Tools were designed to capture comprehensive baseline data; this was followed by mobilisation activities, Situational Assessments, Plans of Action and the signing of Partnership Agreements with participating community leaderships. Several workshops were organized on nutrition, sanitation and hygiene, ECCDE and community democratic processes. Towards the end of 2015 we started the pre-selection of the next batch of Year 2 Centres. Thanks to the grant from UNICEF (approx. \$20,000), we were able to secure a first portion of co-funding for Palms for Life.

There are 2 major side results from the project that are worth being mentioned:

- 1) Thanks to our active involvement with these Early Childhood Development Centres, we have been able to observe in many cases very critical and unhealthy conditions in which these Centres operate. We felt compelled to share these observations with a wider audience especially among government key players and therefore produced a Newsletter called "Voices from the Field." A first such Newsletter was published in 2015. In it we present the very critical data and the startling facts that were captured during the observational visits. The document also contains some pictures.



- 2) At the same time, and thanks to the way we operate in close coordination with the Government, the Project's Methodology was widely endorsed by the Government; also, all key players concurred with Palms for Life and recognized that these Centres serve an important purpose for social service delivery to vulnerable children and need to be strengthened and improved.



## **2. Ecuador: RIEcuador: opportunities for children living in extreme poverty.**

Palms for Life participated in a pilot fundraiser to support the education of children living in extreme poverty in the canton of Gualaceo, in the province of Azuay, Ecuador. Thanks to these funds children are provided with opportunities and experiences otherwise unavailable to them. They receive basic school supplies and scholarships and once a year they participate in field trips to educational sites and locations outside the children's villages to expand their knowledge and world views. While this is a small pilot project it confirms the importance of investing in early childhood care and development as a way to bring children and families out of poverty.



## **3. Nicaragua**

1. We strengthened our relationship with the organization El Porvenir in Nicaragua <sup>1</sup> and supported one micro sanitation project in the José Martí School, Salgado, Camoapa. This was a

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<sup>1</sup> El Porvenir (EP) is a non-profit organization founded in 1990 as a partner to Habitat for Humanity's self-help housing programs that did not include water, bathroom, or kitchen facilities. EP was born to fill that gap. EP empowers rural Nicaraguan communities to improve their living standards and reduce burdens on women through the sustainable development of clean water, sanitation, and cooking systems; watershed protection; and health education (mission). EP has 24 years of experience helping rural Nicaraguan communities

second project that we co-funded for El Porvenir. Our funding helped provided access to sanitation for 33 children, reducing open defecation and improving health. The community's capacity was also increased as they built the latrine and worked to meet the needs of school children. Thanks to this project, children will suffer from fewer diseases resulting in less disease and fewer missed days of school. Education leads to community-wide improvements.

2. **Nicaragua Educa:** Palms for Life designed an innovative program for Nicaragua with the overall goal to improve the quality of education in Nicaragua thereby supporting the Government of Nicaragua's National Education Policy. The idea is to establish a special fund for a 5-year "Nicaragua Educa" Project. The fund will be managed by Palms for Life Fund in the United States. The "Nicaragua Educa" Project will be implemented by local partners in Nicaragua, based on agreed-upon activities and outputs, under the direct supervision of Palms for Life 2. During this period Palms for Life Fund will invest a total of \$2.3 million to drastically improve the quality of primary and secondary education in Nicaragua through the following main activities:

- 1) Create and improve water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure in schools;
- 2) Establish and equip urban and rural learning centers that will provide tutoring, educational supplies, and access to current technology.

This model has the promise to become a successful initiative in Nicaragua directly supporting the Government's strong commitment to improving education for children living in poverty. No funding has yet been identified for this project.

#### **4. Fiscal Sponsorship**

In 2015 we kept our relationship with the "Smiling Hogshead Ranch," an organization that operates an urban farm in Long Island City, New York and promotes sustainable food and waste practices. Under the agreement, Palms for Life will receive donations of cash and other property designated for support of the Smiling Hogshead Ranch Project and make disbursements to support urban agriculture and environmentally sustainable infrastructure. Smiling Hogshead Ranch will also provide horticultural, agricultural, and environmentally sustainable training programs. Currently, the principal office of the Project is located in Queens, New York. Such fiscal sponsorship is made possible because it helps further Palms for Life's educational goals in the areas of addressing the underlying causes of hunger and finding sustainable solutions to food insecurity in the United States of America.

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build appropriate technology as well as providing communities with the tools they need to manage their water, sanitation and forestry resources.

<sup>2</sup> Similar to the model has been implemented by Palms for Life in recent years, with a \$1.9 million grant from USAID and also at present, with a grant from the European Union of \$1.8 million in Swaziland, southern Africa.

We also signed a second Agreement with 7VP Charities who manage the Sanitation Project India. The Sanitation Project was founded by a group of like-minded individuals based out of Austin, Texas. The organization will use funds to first educate villages on the importance of sanitation and then supply a self-sustainable toilet facility. The Sanitation Project is an organization responding to the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi's Swachh Bharat mission, an initiative that encompasses a goal of building more than 5 million toilets in India by 2019.

## 5. Visibility

1. Huffington Post Articles: on the visibility side we want to mention the article that has been posted by Hannah Laufer-Rottman, our Executive Director, in our [blog on the Huffington Post](#).

### ***What Is the Real Meaning of Development and How Can We Achieve Sustainable Results?***

This article addressed important topics that are of continuing interest to Palms for Life:

- As a global citizen, who is responsible for the well-being of children, and especially vulnerable children, around the world?
  - What does development mean in the context of a country with extreme poverty, and often-unreliable social services and policies?
  - Who is responsible for "development"? What is the role of local Government? Of communities? Of NGOs? Of non-locals?
  - How can we hold people, communities, and Governments accountable for development when there are so many competing priorities for basic needs, especially for vulnerable people?
2. Our founder was also invited to write a column on the Gogos in Swaziland for the "MomyBites" website. In that article she explains the condition of the "grandmother" in countries like Swaziland where the HIV/AIDs epidemic has left 1/3 of all children orphans either from one or both parents.

## 6. Other - Revenue

The total revenue and Public Support that we generated in 2015 amounted to \$120,106. This reduction compared to previous years is mainly the result of the end of the USAID grant for Swaziland, and the fact that the new EU-supported project in Swaziland is locally-funded. The same for the UNICEF grant. It should also be noted that Palms for Life continues to experience difficulties in securing operating financial support and this is reflected in the relatively low overall income.

## 7. How we Measure our Success (please consult our Business Plan in Annex B for more details)

We measure our overall success by outcome and impact indicators such as:

- 1) The funds that we have been able to raise from our different activities and campaigns

- 2) The recurring gifts we receive from small foundations and individuals
- 3) The funds that we delivered to our partner organizations on the ground
- 4) The number of people with new opportunities to improve their lives
- 5) Our sustained capacity to support our operations
- 6) The local capacity that we have generated thanks to our projects
- 7) The relationships with corporations and foundations who trust our ability to identify reliable partners and submit good quality projects
- 8) The number of individuals whom we have engaged to support our mission through our signature events and email blasts
- 9) The replicability of innovative fundraising and advocacy models such as Art for Life and Tees for Life.

**Note:**

Our specific projects have different indicators that are specified in a Performance Management Plan and are measured in the short term via Output Indicators and the medium term via Outcome indicators (for instance change in knowledge as a result of training/workshops). In general, impact indicators are much more difficult to assess but we do keep them in mind as our ultimate goals for all projects: changing life opportunities for people living in poverty, in a sustainable way.

## 8. SOCIAL MEDIA



In 2015 we have continued to increase and improve our presence on social media through interns who work with Maayan Laufer. We posted numerous times a day on Twitter, five times a day on Facebook, and increased our presence on Instagram as well. Through periodic advertisements, we consistently gained followers and engaged new people from around the world with Palms for Life Fund.

In preparing for the 2016 Faces of Hunger Film Festival we also increased our presence through the Faces of Hunger brand on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

We've continued to share a newsletter on a regular basis with our supporters about our work, philosophies, Join1000 movement, as well as to honor days of awareness such as Women's Day, Toilet Day, World Water Day...



We've continued to develop the Hannah brand through the idea of #GlobalMother. We post photos of Hannah from her past work and current work to show Hannah's dedication to fighting global poverty throughout decades. We've also continued to post her quotes and her articles on Huffington Post.

## 9. JOIN1000



In 2015 we used funding from Join1000 to support one micro-project in Nicaragua (Improving Sanitation in Schools) . The biggest challenge with Join1000 is to make it a choice that donors make to support Palms for Life the organization. There is so much competition amongst nonprofits that having Palms for Life be a donor's monthly donation is a challenge. That said, it has been a great way to promote Palms for Life and our micro-project to our community and involve them.

# Annex A

Derived from our financial statements. Please contact us if you would like to receive a complete copy of the audited financial statements.

**Palms for Life Fund, Inc.**  
**Statements of Activities**  
 Years Ended December 31, 2015 and 2014

	2015	2014
Changes in unrestricted net assets:		
Revenue and Public Support		
Contributions (Un-Restricted)	\$ 58,796	\$ 60,949
Restricted Donation	\$ 36,403	\$ 12,326
Grants - USAID	\$ -	\$ 74,121
Art for Life	\$ 122	\$ 1,165
Interest and Administrative Inc	\$ 24,784	\$ 221
<b>Total Revenue and Public Support</b>	<b>\$ 120,106</b>	<b>\$ 148,782</b>
Cost of Goods Sold		
Cost of Goods Sold	\$ 720	\$ -
<b>Total COGS</b>	<b>\$ 720</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$ 119,386</b>	<b>\$ 148,782</b>
Expenses		
General and administrative		
Bank Fees	\$ 353	\$ 662
Depreciation	\$ 257	
Dues, Fees & Subscriptions	\$ 478	\$ 688
Insurance	\$ 627	\$ 906
Marketing & Promotion	\$ 3,072	\$ 3,240
Meals and Entertainment	\$ 2,018	\$ 731
Office Expenses	\$ 13,641	\$ 12,609
Payroll	\$ 62,947	\$ 45,157
Professional Fees	\$ 2,696	\$ 12,458
Travel	\$ 271	\$ 461
<b>Total General and administrative</b>	<b>\$ 86,358</b>	<b>\$ 76,910</b>
Fundraising Campaign Expense	\$ (500)	\$ 5,500
Program Expense	\$ 9,591	\$ 9,764
USAID Swaziland - Restricted	\$ -	\$ 99,805
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 95,450</b>	<b>\$ 191,979</b>
<b>Change in net assets</b>	<b>\$ 23,936</b>	<b>\$ (43,197)</b>
<b>Net assets at beginning of year</b>	<b>\$ 40,443</b>	<b>\$ 83,640</b>
<b>Net assets at end of year</b>	<b>\$ 64,379</b>	<b>\$ 40,443</b>

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# Annex B

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## Business and Strategic Plan 2012-2014

### Introduction and Founding Principles

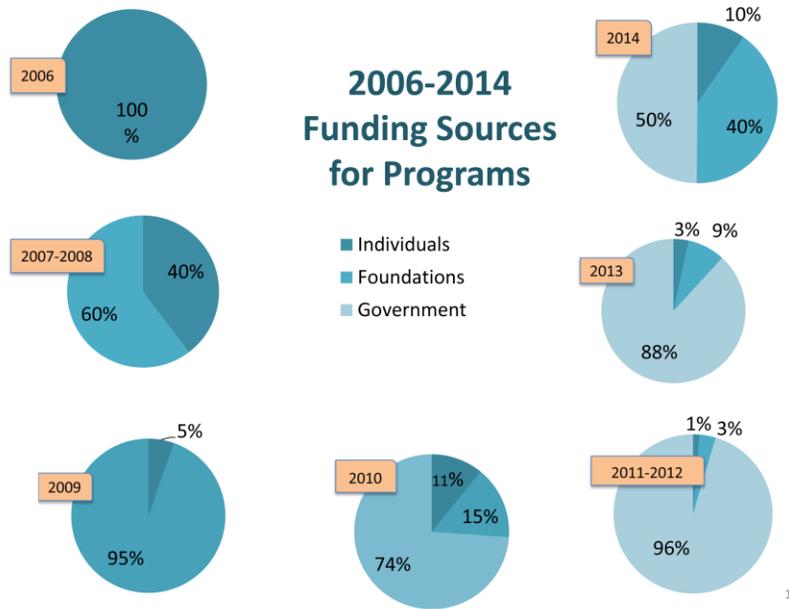
Palms for Life Fund was founded in 2006 as a not-for-profit (501(c)(3) dedicated to ending poverty around the world by addressing its root causes. We work with a range of investors to raise funds and support innovative programs in the areas of food, water and education. Since its inception in 2006, Palms for Life Fund has impacted the lives of thousands of people around the world.

Our founding principles and the ones that guide us in our partnerships and fundraising are:

- 1) It is essential that our programs are empowering, sustainable, and have potential to scale in order for true transformational change to take place.
- 2) We are committed to building and leading a **Global Alliance** to address the serious and growing poverty challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and mobilizing support from all corners of our global society – encouraging as much investment in poor populations as possible.
- 3) Our activities are **Human Right** driven: the right for every individual in the world to have daily access to a hot meal, fresh drinking water, and a pencil & a teacher. Palms for Life addresses the lack of these with a sense of emergency.
- 4) We understand that populations facing social and economic hardship are not destined to be poor.
- 5) We have the firm belief that eradicating poverty has to happen **now**, for **all** and that we have to do it **right**.

### Organizational Structure

Since 2006, Palms for Life has transformed from a small-scale organization to a robust non-profit with multi-million dollar grant-programs operating across the world. In the beginning, Palms for Life primarily attracted donations from individuals but today is largely funded by foundations and bilateral Government sources.



Palms for Life headquarters is based in New York. In 2010 the organization established a local satellite office in Swaziland (where it currently manages a three year, \$1.9 million dollar USAID-funded project).

Palms for Life is led by its Founder and Executive Director, Hannah Laufer-Rottman, who has spent her entire career fighting global poverty. Ms. Laufer-Rottman has held senior-level positions with the United Nations World Food Programme in Latin America and Africa, helping feed and educate millions of poor people across the world. Palms for Life Fund was born out of the memories of people and communities Ms. Laufer-Rottman had encountered and whose immediate needs were still unmet.

Palms for Life prides itself on its cost-efficient approach and this is reflective in its trim yet effective organizational structure. Palms for Life has extensive expertise in:

#### Designing program interventions

- Writing grant proposals
- Building partnerships
- Developing implementation strategies
- Establishing monitoring and evaluation systems
- Providing financial management and support

#### The Palms for Life team and network include:

Executive Director (Headquarters)  
 Program Officer (Headquarters) Interns (seasonal - Headquarters)  
 Legal Advisory (Outsourced)  
 Financial Management (Outsourced)  
 Palms for Life Swaziland team (10)  
 Team of rotating Consultants (specific to expertise needed)  
 IT Professional (Part-Time)

Audit Advisory (Outsourced)  
Executive Board  
Global Advisory Board  
Global Volunteer program *Volunteers for Life* (rotating)

As Palms for Life continues to grow, internal operating capacity will be expanded proportionally (see page 7).

In the countries where we operate, projects are implemented by Palms for Life's trusted and reputable local partners. Palms for Life provides technical and strategic support to its local partners throughout the planning, implementation and evaluation process of a project.

### **Palms for Life's Philosophy on Poverty - The Global Alliance**

The Global Alliance is a Palms for Life platform for engaging the widest possible audience - from individuals to non-profits to corporations - in the fight against poverty. For example, in 2009, a group of UBS employees gave to Palms for Life a check for \$15,000 of personal donations to support education programs for street children in Ecuador called "CuentameLo Todo." The project gave street children a unique opportunity to learn and enjoy reading and playing, on the street.

Through spreading awareness, sharing information and building solidarity around poverty issues, Palms for Life serves as an "Ambassador" for poor communities across the world.

The Global Alliance also extends to the United States - where Palms for Life is active in raising awareness and understanding about hunger and poverty through for example the production of a video series on hunger. Palms for Life is helping to shift the national conversation -- from words to solutions -- and is endlessly advocating for the idea that access to food should be considered a basic human right -- beyond charity - and not an income-driven privilege.

Whether it concerns a hungry family in America, a small rural village in Swaziland or an urban slum in Ecuador, Palms for Life believes:

- It's everybody's business if a child goes to bed on a hungry stomach;
- It's everybody's business if a child does not attend school;
- It's everybody's business if any individual does not have access to clean water.

**"We Are All Connected to the Poor"**

### **Palms for Life Core Values - Our Approach**

Three values guide and shape all of our projects and undertakings.

#### **1. Local Capacity Building**

- Palms for Life provides local partners with **basic tools and equipment** that they need in order to function effectively. This includes very practical solutions that enable its partners to accomplish their goals and achieve sustainable impact - such as adequate communication, technology and transportation equipment/infrastructure.
- Palms for Life also creates local **partnerships** between local organizations in order to facilitate knowledge sharing and resources. These partnerships also have the potential to influence local decision-makers (i.e. Government Ministries) and increase the likelihood of project success.

## 2. Holistic and Sustainable community-centered approach

A holistic strategy recognizes every community action is interdependent with another and therefore, Palms for Life designs every project with this philosophy in mind. For instance, when promoting women's participation in a food production project, Palms for Life ensures that issues such as women's health, children's education, household food security, level of literacy etc. are all taken into consideration and duly addressed.

We recognize however, that Palms for Life alone, is not always in the position to execute a holistic strategy (that addresses all interconnected elements). However, we do not neglect these areas as they can jeopardize the sustainability of a project. We research and identify investors and partners who are willing to complement our own efforts with essential inputs.

Additionally, in order to achieve sustainable impact, Palms for Life ensures every project is:

- **Participatory** (inclusive)
- **Empowering** (creates jobs)
- **Responsive** to actual needs (proper baseline research and local engagement)
- **Cost-Efficient** (easily maintained locally)
- **Replicable** (potential to scale)
- **Environmentally Conscious** (utilizes local resources & improves natural environment)

## 3. Investing in Women and Girls

Palms for Life integrates gender analysis in its program architecture to ensure that the needs of women and girls are systematically considered throughout the project implementation. We embrace this as a core value because Palms for Life believes women and girls are the agents of change - and the ones who will ultimately play critical roles in community transformation.

For instance, in Burkina Faso, Palms for Life supported rural women with seeds, fertilizers and a water pump. An in-depth analysis of the situation revealed that rural women did not have access to basic agricultural equipment. Therefore, in subsequent phases, Palms for Life secured funding for agriculture equipment to support the women's work. If this area had not been addressed, it would have jeopardized the outcome and impact of the project. Such an approach also empowers women to be true participants – and active leaders in every Palms for Life project.

## **Development - Fundraising**

Palms for Life receives financial support from individuals, foundations, corporations and bilateral donors.

### 1. Program Grants

In 2010, Palms for Life achieved a major success in receiving its largest program grant to date – a \$1.9 million dollar award from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) for a Water and Food Security program in rural Swaziland. The 3-year program benefits more than 40,000 vulnerable school children and their families by strengthening water supply, sanitation and food security systems in 120 participating schools.

This first grant from USAID enables Palms for Life to reach a significantly large number of poor children and thus to considerably expand our impact.

Palms for Life applies for program grants via two approaches:

- I. Palms for Life is the direct recipient of all program funds and supervises the program management. Palms for Life allocates 5-10% for its program management services (based on Palms for Life’s indirect costs). The remaining 90-95% is devoted to projects and local implementing partners so as to maximize impact and scale.

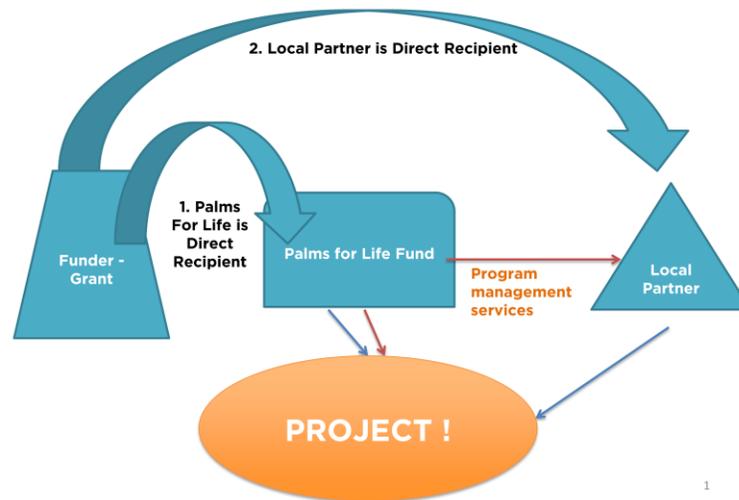
*Total Value of Program Grants where **Palms for Life** was Direct recipient 2006-2011 = \$2,293,659*

or

- II. Our local partner is the direct recipient and receives all program funds except 5-10% that are allocated to Palms for Life for program management services.

*Total Value of Program Grants where **Local Partners** were Direct recipient 2006-2011 = \$2,078,601*

### Two Program Grant Approaches



From 2006-2011, Palms for Life has generated program grants valuing \$4,372,260 (under its direct management or its local partners).<sup>3</sup>

**2. Internal Capacity Grant** – In some instances, investors have chosen to support the internal operations of Palms for Life. To date, this funding has been insufficient and will need to be considerably increased in order to allow Palms for Life to achieve sustained growth going forward.

**3. Small Donations:** Palms for Life has a small portfolio of foundations that donate to select projects on an annual basis. These small-scale initiatives contribute to Palms for Life’s diversified portfolio – including pilot projects and *For Life* projects.

<sup>3</sup> The cost of generating this portfolio totaled \$202,737 - less than 5% of portfolio value. This was made possible by a considerable subsidy of time and expertise of senior staff and consultants (low salaries), board of advisors (pro-bono) and volunteers/interns (stipend).

**4. For Life Projects:** Palms for Life has designed a series of innovative marketing concepts (i.e. *Art for Life, Tees for Life*) to raise funds and increase awareness about hunger and poverty. These support small projects in Palms for Life's six focus countries.

### **How we Measure Success**

Ultimately, we define our success by the impact of our programs – how much the livelihoods of our project participants have been changed thanks to our support.<sup>4</sup>

Other indicators include:

**# of partnerships** established locally: For example, in 2008, Palms for Life established a unique partnership with *The Foundation for Community Development* (FDC), a local organization in Mozambique, of which the President of the Board is Mrs. Graça Machel, wife of former President Mr. Nelson Mandela. In 2009, with pivotal assistance of Palms for Life, the UBS Optimus Foundation awarded FDC a \$1.2 million dollar project that is helping increase school attendance and enhancing the educational performance of thousands of Mozambican boys and girls.

- **# of jobs** provided locally: In the aforementioned \$1.9 million dollar project in Swaziland, Palms for Life has hired and trained 35 workers and students in 2011 alone.
- **Low ratio** of administration/operating costs versus program allocation.
- **Level of awareness** disseminated: For example, in 2009 - Palms for Life executed a nationwide film contest titled "Faces of Hunger in America" that prompted young people to produce a short film about hunger in their own community. These videos became viral and were watched by 58,000+ people online and received over 30,000 votes. The six films with the highest number of online votes were subsequently reviewed by a renowned panel of judges at the Action Center to End World Hunger located in New York City. This project was made possible thanks to the donation of the Dextra Baldwin McGonagle Foundation.

As part of this project, Palms for Life also produced a PSA-public service announcement (consisting of footage from the film contest) that was shown in eight movie theatres in New York and Los Angeles. An estimated 50,000 people over the course of a few months viewed the PSA as a coming attraction before a movie. These hunger campaigns have had a nation-wide impact – and established Palms for Life as a leading organization committed to fighting hunger and poverty in the US.

## **The Way Forward in 2012-2014**

### **Program Strategy - Internal Capacity Building Plan - Operational Framework**

#### **1. Program Strategy**

*Six countries -- Seven Strategic Areas*

*(Projection: \$5,000,000 in program grants over 3 years)*

In 2012-2014, Palms for Life will increase its impact by strategically narrowing its focus. Beginning in 2012, Palms for Life will limit its focus areas to food, water and education and will no longer support other development areas. Since its inception in 2006, Palms for Life Fund has funded programs in a range of social and economic development areas such as child/maternal health, microfinance and job training. Future interventions will potentially integrate such complementary programming in order to build projects that are holistic as possible

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<sup>4</sup> *Palms for Life views the people it helps as active participants (not beneficiaries) which establishes accountability and mutual responsibility.*

(i.e. micro-finance for rural farming program). However, complementary programming will remain a secondary component to a primary program in food, water or education.

In 2012-2014, Palms for Life will exclusively work in countries where it has in-depth understanding of the local environment -- and where it has established unique partnerships with local organizations. This guarantees Palms for Life's projects are of the highest quality and generate maximum impact and potential for scalability.

Within the areas of food, water and education, Palms will work in the following six countries:

- Burkina Faso
- Ecuador
- Ethiopia
- India
- Mozambique
- Swaziland

### **Seven Strategic Areas**

Palms for Life will focus on the following strategic areas in 2012-2014:

- 1) **New programs:** pursue and explore opportunities in key areas - food, water & education; replicate successful models to other Palms for Life focus countries.
- 2) **Ongoing programs:** sustain commitments and identify new partnerships and investments for additional complementary support (holistic strategy).
- 3) **Small-scale pilot programs:** test new program initiatives; apply monitoring & evaluation; focus on learning & innovation.
- 4) **Hunger in America:** mobilize awareness about Hunger in America by launching a new national film or writing contest called *Facing Up to Hunger in America* (building upon the 2009 successful film contest *Faces of Hunger in America*).
- 5) **For Life Projects:** expand platform by identifying new opportunities to engage consumers; find new perspective private sector participants.
- 6) **Communication and Visibility:** share our success stories; communicate project impact and inspire investment; facilitate dialogue between investors and local partners; organize field visits and sharing of expertise (i.e. US-based engineers working on Africa water projects). Seek partners to organize a national discussion about *How to eradicate poverty and hunger: now and for all and how to do it right*.
- 7) **Local capacity building:** further support and grow Palms for Life network of local partners; scale-up volunteer program – where young, qualified enthusiastic students help local partners implement, monitor and evaluate projects.

A major success was Palms for Life's 2010 USAID grant of \$1.9 million dollar for Swaziland. In addition to the added credibility the organization has gained, the grant has allowed Palms for Life to expand operations and strengthen internal infrastructure – which positions Palms for Life to manage larger grants going forward.

### **Program Grant Projection for 2012-2014**

Taking this into account, Palms for Life's **projected goal for 2012-2014 is \$5,000,000.**

Country Breakdown:

- Burkina Faso – \$150,000
- Ecuador – \$600,000
- Ethiopia – \$750,000
- India – \$2,000,0000

- Mozambique – \$1,000,000
- Swaziland – \$500,000 (in addition to considerable funding already committed for 2012-2013)

## 2. Internal Capacity Building Plan

**Projection: \$250,000 in capacity grants over 3 years**

In order to continue to grow and accomplish the aforementioned Seven Strategic Areas, Palms for Life needs to strengthen its internal capacity by adding experienced talent in the following three areas:

### Marketing & Communications: *Need: Part-Time Marketing/Communications Expert*

In addition to a new website launched at the end of 2011, Palms for Life will execute a robust communication plan to share our success stories and increase visibility within the business world, NGO community and philanthropic sector. This communication campaign combined with a revamped marketing/branding effort will have a profound effect on fundraising objectives. Social media will also be enhanced as a method to engage a wide net of supporters and enthusiasts, including a concentrated focus on young people (millennials).

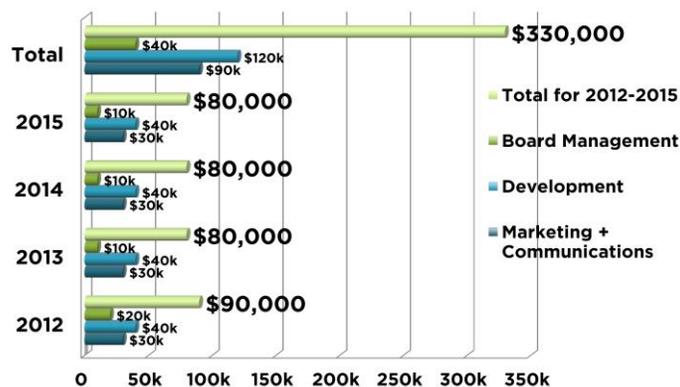
### Development: *Need: Part-Time Director of Development*

Currently, Palms for Life works hand in hand with grant-writing specialists/consultants on large-scale opportunities. For grants under \$50K, Palms for Life usually allocates time and resources without outside assistance. However, as the size and number of grants has gradually increased in 2010 and 2011, there is a strong need for further grant writing support. This also extends to larger development support beyond proposal writing – including a need for an individual who can identify and cultivate relationships with a wide range of donors (individuals, foundations, corporations etc.).

### Board Management *Need: Non-profit strategy consultant (board recruitment, training, etc.)*

Palms for Life Fund recognizes the need to add and more effectively engage its board members. Reinforced accountability and specific responsibilities will be introduced in order to create new opportunities for Palms for Life. Increased recruitment efforts are also needed to build a more diverse board with extensive networks and skills.

**Marketing, Development, and Board Management Costs**



### 3. Operational Framework

*(\$1,350,000 operating costs over 3 years)*

To date, Palms for Life has functioned and exceeded organizational expectations thanks to a combination of factors: 1) low operating costs/overhead; 2) cost-effective management; 3) highly subsidized services provided by its Executive Director and Program Officer; 4) use of interns; 5) volunteer work by “friends” of Palms for Life; and 6) Global Advisory Board.

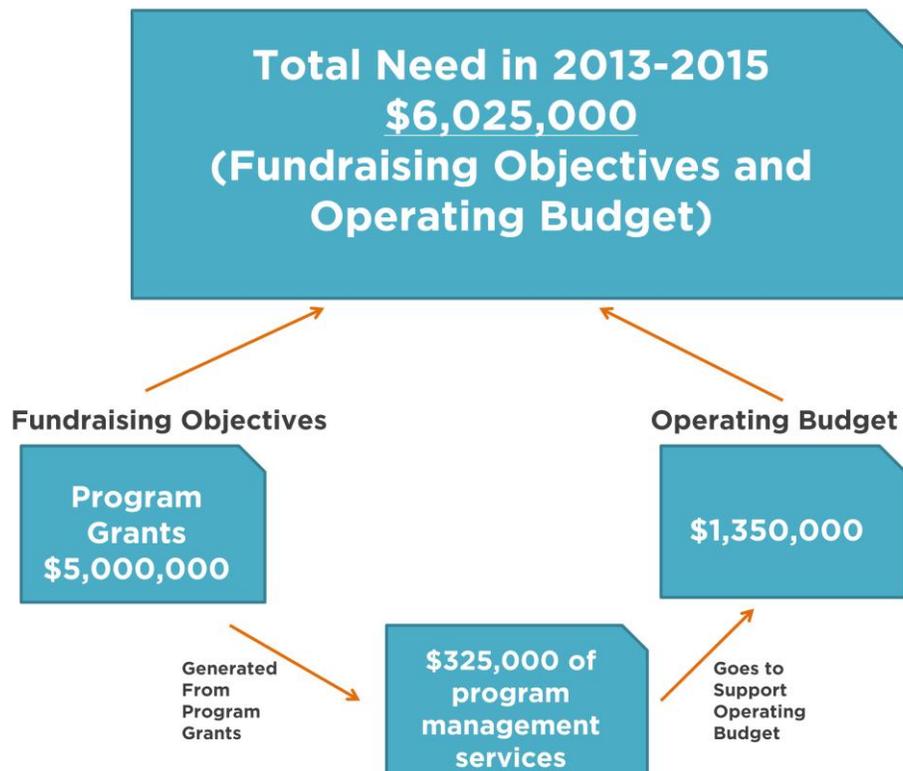
However, at this point, in order to sustain its growth and strengthen its capacity, Palms for Life has projected an annual operating budget over the next three years of \$450,000 (totaling \$1,350,000). This figure covers Palms for Life salaries, consultant fees, rent and office expenses, travel costs and other administrative expenses.

#### How will 2012-2014 Operating Budget be generated?

1. \$1,025,000 direct fundraising
2. \$325,000 (7% indirect costs for program management services)

#### Summary of Needs and Projections

Palms for Life will raise **\$6,025,000** during 2012-2014 to meet operating budget needs and program fundraising objectives.



## **Why Palms for Life Fund is a unique anti-poverty organization**

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- Accountable & accomplished non-profit
- Dynamic leadership and expertise led by Hannah Laufer-Rottman
- Small-scale management structure (personalized project attention)
- Cost-efficient model (ensuring minimum 90% of project costs are spent on the ground)
- Innovative project models ideal for replication and scale (based on local capacities)
- Diversified impact – focuses on both small and large scale change (from the individual to the community)
- Palms for Life projects respond to actual needs
- Palms for Life provides assurance to high-profile investors who prefer having an experienced and trusted US-based NGO take ownership of a project and oversee local partner activities

Palms for Life Fund works hand in hand – Palm in Palm - with the global poor. In the words of Founder and Executive Director Hannah Laufer-Rottman:

***“The noble palm tree, symbol of renewal, serenity and joy, reminds us that by reaching out to others we can strengthen the lives of men, women and children around the world.”***